

## DOCTRINAL AND CONTROVERSIAL.

"THE AGITATION OF THOUGHT IS THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM."

The Editors reserve the right to erase all improper personalities and objectionable expressions found in any article accepted for this department; and they alone shall be the judges.

## The Conflict.—No. 11.

BY S. B. FURRY.

"I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me."—Rom. 7: 21.

Those who are strangers to the conflict in which the Christian is engaged, can never clearly comprehend Paul's language, or enter into the feelings which produce such a depth of confession and abasement. In religious matters more than in any other the heart knows its own bitterness in the warfare. The conflict is between the spirit and the flesh, and how often is it that the good we would, we do not, and the evil we would not, that we do.

We do not intend to take into consideration the disputes upon the seventh chapter of Romans. Let men's conjectures be what they please, but one thing we do know, and that is, it fully represents a sore conflict within every true follower of the Lord Jesus. There are many professors it is true, who never enter this field of conflict, for this reason, they consider themselves good enough without any striving to become better and more worthy of their calling. Instead of abasement theirs is exaltation, forgetting that whoever "exalts himself shall be abased." This has been the spirit of man from the beginning of his fallen nature until now. The greatest trouble the Savior had was to convince the people of their unworthiness, and their need of a conflict to attain holiness, without which "no man shall see the Lord." The trouble is that many become so holy within themselves as to be entire strangers to the conflict under consideration. They are about as good as they wish to be, and look upon others as pitiful sinners and beneath themselves. Just about like the Pharisee looked upon the publican, and the Jew upon the Samaritan. They seem to think the "old man" is conquered and entirely dead. If that would be the case there would be no need to watch and pray. We have much more respect for a man or woman who is in conflict over a mean and contemptible disposition, than for such who are naturally pretty good, but do not strive to become better. The victory is only gained through persevering conflict.

There are three great enemies to contend with: the world, the flesh, and the devil. The world is leading away from Christ, because it is at enmity against God; the flesh lusts after sin, but it is not subject to the will of God; and the devil is going to and fro deceiving as an angel of light, or to devour as a roaring lion, because he is jealous of the power of God. To overcome these adversaries requires a constant warfare. Those who think it an easy thing to be a Christian forget to "strive to enter in at the straight gate!" They do not press into the kingdom of heaven, and are indeed strangers to the conflict. They are not transformed by the renewing of their minds, fall short of the requirements of the Gospel and "have a name that they live, but are dead." They wear the form of godliness, retain evil passions, indulge in worldly amusements, live at ease in Zion, and are distinguished by nothing like exertion or sacrifice. But this should not discourage those who are zealously disposed for the conflict. Paul says, "I have fought a good fight," and it was enough for him to justify his cause, or choice; and to animate him to go forward, notwithstanding the flesh warring against him, and the sore opposition pressing him on all sides. Let us buckle on the armor and fight, likewise, and eventually we shall grasp the palms of victory and wear the crown of righteousness.

## Parvum in Multo.

BY NOSAM.

A man may work a great deal of mischief and evil and yet not be a great man. Many people's prominence consists merely in being ugly-natured, prejudiced and spiteful.

To make a lie believable, it must be mixed up with a little truth at least. It is the little truth in it that makes the lie acceptable.

Manly piety makes even unbelief its friend. An

uneasy, apologetic, compromising Christian is only an object of deserved contempt on the part of those who behold him trying to trim his sails to winds of circumstances.

A falsehood does not become a truth merely by saying it over and over. The frantic mob that screamed "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" for two hours did not prove that she was so. Some of us can learn a lesson from this.

A stir means life. A stir is better than stagnation. A running brook is better than a stagnant pool full of poison and malaria. Stir even if it does involve a little conflict is preferable to the quiet of sloth and deadness. A sermon that gains everybody's approbation that they call it "just splendid," is not of much force. When we see a stir—the sign of life—in a congregation, there is hope of some good result. The present prosperous state of the Brethren Church is the result of a stir commenced a few years ago.

A minister who always seems to have a new message for his congregation, or rather the old message put in a new way, you may put it down for a fact that it is the result of faithful study of God's word. A man that fills his heart and brain from the fountain head must have a sweeter supply of the Water of Life than he who is filled from the dregs of other men's drawings.

Stereotyped prayers and sermons are nauseating to the average intelligent hearer, and carry with them no force and accomplish no good. Brethren have some originality about you.

When you shoot always take good aim and try to hit something. Stray and random shots sometimes hit, but it is accidental and even when this occurs, it astonishes the shooter. When you fire the Gospel gun, aim at the enemy. The devil and his satellites must receive no mercy.

"Covetousness \* \* \* is idolatry" when more reliance is placed on our wealth than on God's promise. Our hugging of wealth, our unwillingness to part with money when we have abundance of it, is a result of our dependence on wealth. It is so hard for us to feel that we are just as sure of one to-morrow's breakfast when the only provision for it is a promise of God, as when we have a supply of manna kept over—to breed worms and give forth a stench. Reliance on money puts money in God's place, therefore covetousness is idolatry.

## A Word of Advice.

It is as easy to be a good man as a poor one. Half the energy displayed in keeping ahead that is required to catch up when behind, would gain credit, give more time to attend to business, and add to the profit and reputation of those who work for gain. Be prompt; honor your engagements. If you promise to meet a man, or do a certain thing at a certain moment, be ready at the appointed time. If you go out on business, attend promptly to the matter on hand, and then as promptly to your own business. Do not stop to tell stories during business hours. If you have a place of business, be there when wanted. No man can get rich by sitting around stores and saloons. Never "fool" on business matters. Have order, system, regularity and promptness. Do not meddle with business you know nothing of. Never buy an article you do not need, simply because it is cheap, and the man who sells it will take it out in trade. Trade is money. Strive to avoid harsh words and personalities. Do not kick every stone in the path—more miles can be made in a day by going steadily on, than by stopping to kick. Pay as you go; a man of honor respects his word as he does his bond. Aid, but never beg. Relieve others when you can, but never give what you cannot afford to, simply because it is fashionable.

Learn to say no. No necessity for snapping it out, dog-fashion, but say it firmly and respectfully.

Have but few confidants. Use your own brains rather than those of others. Learn to act and think for yourself. Be vigilant. Keep ahead rather than behind the times. Young man, cut this out and place it, by careful perusal, in the golden storehouse of your brain, and if you find there is folly in the argument, let us know.—SEL.

The proud and covetous never rest.

## God's Care of His People.

We are not only, like Israel, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, but our God having made us his people, he provides for us by the way, giving constant evidence of his abounding grace. We do not go to warfare at our own charges. He never leaves nor forsakes us. All through our journey, our necessity is his opportunity for doing us good. Because he careth for us, he bids us cast all our care upon him—to be careful for nothing. Unworthy as we often prove ourselves of the least of his mercies, still he loads us with benefits, he leads us about, he keeps us as the apple of his eye.—SELECTED.

## A Bad Tone.

Do we ever really know a man till we have heard his voice? Not what he says, but how he says it, gives us an insight into his human character. Kind words may have a bitter meaning, and blunt words may sound sweetly if the tones are gentle and loving. Avoid the scolding tone. A tired mother may find it hard to do this; but it is she who will get most good by observing the rule. The tone of scolding wears upon the throat, just where a woman who is not over strong is apt to feel the ache of extreme fatigue. The children too who are great imitators, will be sure to catch the scolding tone, and will talk to their dolls, to one another, and by and by to their own children, very much as their mothers are now talking to them. By all means avoid this bad tone if you wish to govern others.—SEL.

## Great Gain.

The worldlings are hungry for gain, and are seeking on every hand to increase their possessions; and yet what fruit have they of all their restless toil? How little do they achieve at the end of all their labors! At last they look back upon their wasted lives, and forward to darkness and despair.

They have sought much, gained little, and lost all. But "godliness with contentment is great gain". Even in this world the godly are prospered and blessed, and find less poverty and trial than those who know not God; and then there is the life beyond, with all its joy and peace and love and gladness; a life that knows no sorrow and no decay; a life that is full and free, and boundless and eternal. What has earth to compare with this? What can the world promise, and what can the world perform that can stand for a moment beside the eternal wealth and blessedness that come through the gospel of Christ?

Blessed are they who know this gospel, and who find in Christ their joy, their treasure, and their all.—THE CHRISTIAN.

If we never spoke of a man's virtues before his face, nor of his faults behind his back, there would be an end to flattery and defamation.

It is always a choice of masters to which Christ is urging men. It is not by striking off all allegiance, but by finding your true Lord, and serving Him with complete submission, that you can escape from slavery. Then give yourself to Him completely. Let Him mark you as His by whatever marks He will.—PHILIP BROOKS.

There are souls in the world who have the gift of finding joy everywhere, and of leaving it behind them when they go. Joy gushes from under their fingers, like jets of light. Their influence is an inevitable gladdening of the heart. It seems as if a shadow of God's own gift had passed upon them. They give light without meaning to shine. These bright hearts have a great work to do for God.—FABER.

There is a sublimity in patience. In its highest forms it makes you think of God. To do a thing, and, when needed, to keep doing it, to wait for the desired end, not sluggishly, but diligently, if necessary, not despondingly, but ever with a brave hope—this is grand character. Imitate your heavenly Father, in whom is the grandest character. Some things can not be done in a day. God does not make a sunset glory in a moment, but for days he may be massing the mists out of which he builds his palaces beautiful in the West. Labor patiently, looking to God for the highest success.—AMERICAN MESSENGER.